

Sea Breezes

Mr. Punkin on the Fourth of July.

"This is th' glorify day ov our independence," said Mr. Punkin, as a cannon cracker burst near him and threw dust in his eyes. "This is th' day we throw'd off th' yoke ov Englan', an' tuk up th' yoke ov th' trusts. I kin see ol' John Hancock now as he tuk up his pen, dipped it up t' huddle in th' ink horn, an' writ his name with a flourish, an' afterwards made a pickchure ov a fishin' tackle under it. It must ov ben a gran' sight t' see them ol' fellows dressed in th' white stockin's an' satin waistcoats, fallin' over each other t' sign that dockment."

"Have yuh ever read th' Declarashun ov Independence, Uncle Tobo," asked young Ab. Kitley.

"Oh, yes, Abby, many a time. I know'd it by heart once, but I've forgot most ov it. However, I ricollect that they accuses King George III., ov everything in th' worl' from not bein' a gen'lman t' breakin' th' ten commandments. Th' only thing they didn't accuse him ov is organizin' a trust, an' they hadn't ben invented at th' time."

"Did John Hancock write it, Uncle Tobo?"

"No, mnh boy, he signed it clear across th' page, but Thomas Jefferson, th' father ov ev'ry political party in Ameriky, writ th' paper. He shortly was a good han' at abusin' Kings. When Jefferson got through with a King you bet that King felt like th' dooce. They tell me now ev'ry time a Englishman hears Jefferson's name he utters a frightful ojackylashun. Did yuh ever hear 'bout th' time Ben Pickett invited th' stranger in t' a Fo'th ov Jul' celebrashun? No? Well Ben died I reckon afore yuh was

born. He was a brickmason by trade, but he never worked more'n two weeks in a year; th' rest ov th' year he spent in crookin' his elbow. One particukler Fo'th ov Jul' he bought a gallon ov hicker an' invited th' boys up t' his house t' drink mint juleps. 'Bout thirty ov 'em gathered thar, an' jest as they was 'bout t' toss off th' firs' roun' a stranger rode by on horesback. Ben rushed t' th' door an' sed, 'Come in' suh, an' have one with us.' 'Don't keer ef I do,' sez th' stranger. An' they maked him a julep. Then they all held up th' juleps in th' air an' smacked th'ir lips, an' Ben stood on tip-toe and sed: 'Hyuh's t' th' glorious Fo'th ov Jul', which marks th' birth ov th' Amerikin nashun an' makes a' Eng-lishman shudder ev'ry time he thinks ov it.' An' they all lifted th'ir glasses an' grinned intuh th' bottom ov 'em—all excep' th' stranger. 'What's th' matter, mnh frien', sez Ben, 'thar ain't no pizen in it, is thar?' 'Naw,' sez he, 'his eyes fairly waterin' as he looked at that julep; but I can't drink it; I stan' b'tween love an' duty. I'm a loyal subject ov Queen Victoria, —er—er—' an' he gazed lovin'ly at th' glass. 'Cawn't I just go outside an' drink it?' 'Yes sir-ree,' sez Ben, 'I never stan's b'tween a man's an' his country; no more do I stan' b'tween him an' his hicker.' Th' result was th' stranger staid thar a week, an' when he come to he put in fuh his naturalizashun papers."

"Why did they seke th' Fo'th ov Jul'?" asked Euky Mears. "Wouldn't Saint Patrick's Day have done jest as well?"

"It might have suited Tammany Hall as well," said Mr. Punkin solemnly. "But th' gin'ral run ov pe'pul wouldn't have thought so fav'able ov it. Th' ol' fathers know'd what they was doin' when they s'lected th' Fo'th ov Jul'. It ain't possible t' stay in Philadelphia any later'n that. Yuh know it was signed in that city. They signed up an' then rushed fuh Atlantic City whar they could go in swimmin'. I've seen th' place whar it was signed when I was in Philadelphia in 1776 or 1876, I fergit which. I remember I spent all I'd saved in five years thar. I've never ben able t' git anywhar sence that time. My watch stopped runnin' an' I handed it t' a feller that had a stan' on th' street, an' he wound it up an' charged me two dollars fuh th' job. Th' room th' declarashun was signed in ain't bigger'n this store room. I've ben t' some historic places in my time. I've stood whar Patrick Henry sed, 'Give me liberty or giv' me death.' I've seen th' place whar Alexander Hamilton clumb over th' ramparts at Yorktown, Ghl' Washin'ton givin' him a leg. I've seen whar th' Merrimack an' th' Monitor had it out, an' I've looked at th' spot whar Pokey-huntas reskewed John Smith. Ov co'se, I haven't seen all th' places whar she saved his life, but I've seen th' one that appears t' me t' be th' mos' reasonabl'. Mo' than that, I seen John L. Sullivan once as he was passin' through on th' train."

"Th' Fo'th ov Jul' teaches us many vallyble lessons. One is that no matter how much independence a man's got it don't amount t' nothin' unless he declar's it; another is, that whatever we might think ov th' habits ov th' ol' fathers, thar ain't no discount on th'ir curridge; still another, I would add, is never t' let hot weather keep yuh from any important undertakin'. A little bit ov hot weather now-a-days scares folks t' death. Have yuh ever seen a pickshur ov th' signin' ov th' declarashun? I have. Thar's all them ol' fellows standin' thar lookin' as cool as cucumbers. Ben Franklin an' Thomas Jefferson w' Mr. Livin'ston an' Reger Sherman an' Jawn Hancock an' Ghl' Washin'ton—"

"Ghl' Washin'ton warn't thar!" broke in Dink Herring.

"That's so, Dink, he warn't. He was fightin' an' they was signin'; but as I was sayin' all ov 'em was standin' thar with th'ir wigs on an' not a hyar ruffled, an' th'ir shirt bussuns was jest as white an' clean an' not a collar wilted. An' thar warn't any ov 'em in th'ir shirt sleeves either. 'Twas a time fuh keepin' cool, an' they kep' cool, too. Congress in them days was about th' size ov a city council now an' not one-third as bad. When they sent a man t' Congress or th' legislashure, yuh bet thar warn't one left at home any better'n he was. I don't say thar ain't any good men in Congress now—thar may be some that got thar accidently; but I ain't ben able t' vote fuh a man that I thought would make a good Congress-man sence th' war."

"How many men signed that air declarashun Mr. Punkin?" asked Heel Shambila.

"Fifty-six ov 'em, Heck, an' wonderf'ul t' relate, they lef' eighty-two thousan' descendants. I have traveled a good deal, but I have never yit ben t' a place whar thar warn't at least one ov th' descendants ov these illustrious persons. I'm satisfied if they was t' organize a lodge ov th' descendants ov th' signers it would be bigger'n th' National Grange. I've tried hard t' number myself among 'em, but thar ain't no use. Nobody that signed was named Punkin. My mother's name

was Hopkins, but I'm shore she warn't related t' Step Hopkins.

"I remember one Fo'th ov Jul' many years ago when I recited 'Th' Star Spangled Banner' at th' Bazoo county fair. Jest arter I finished ol' man Ben Gimpkins come up t' me an' he sez, 's'e—an' his eyes rolled about as they usually did, 'Toby, my boy, yuh'll be President ov these United States some day; that was th' finest piece I ever heered recited.' An' I sed, 'Thank yuh, suh.' Th' ol' man never lived t' see his profesy come true, an' neither have I. Th' only thing I ever done with doin' was t' keep Billy Pringle out ov Congress. I cast th' decidin' vote in th' convenshun, an' th' dees-trict ought t' have peshuned me fuh life. He got me a hickin' once at school fuh somethin' he'd done, but I reckon we're squar'."

"Thar is much talk ov patriotism in this country, but arter all, it ain't th' citizen ov th' United States that's gladdest t' see Fo'th ov Jul' come."

"Who is it?" asked old Ab. Kitley, swallowing the bait.

"It's th' Chinaman," said Mr. Punkin. "He makes th' fireworks."

JOHN WEYMOUTH.

A STRENUOUS REMEDY.

How a Servant Tried to Sober Up a Bihulous Diplomat.

The story had reference to a former senator of the United States who was sent to Russia as minister. There were various evidences in the archives of the legation that sobriety was not this gentleman's especial virtue and among them very many copies of notes in which the minister, through the secretary of legation, excused himself from keeping engagements at the foreign office on the ground of "sudden indisposition."

Mr. Prince told me that one day this minister's valet, who was an Irishman, came to the consulate and said: "O'll not stay with his igsillency any longer. O've done wid him." "What's the trouble now?" said Mr. Prince.

"Well," said the man, "this morning O'l thought it was toime to get his igsillency out of bed, for he had been drunk about a week and in bed most of the toime, and so O'l went to him and says gentle-look, 'Would your igsillency have a cup of coffee?' when he rose up and shtruck me in the face. On that O'l took him by the collar, lifted him out of bed, took him across the room, showed him his ugly face in the glass, and O'l said to him, says O'l, 'Is thim the eyes of an invoy extraor-r-r-dinary and minister plinipotentary?'"—From the Autobiography of Andrew D. White.

HUMMING BIRDS.

Feeding the Bantlings Looks Like a Dangerous Operation.

When I first crawled in among the bushes close to the nest the little mother darted at me and poised a foot from my nose, as if to stare me out of countenance. She looked me all over from head to foot twice. Then she seemed convinced that I was harmless.

She whirled and sat on the nest edge. The bantlings opened wide their hungry mouths. She spread her tail like a flicker and braced herself against the nest side. She craned her neck and drew her dagger-like bill straight up above the nest. She plunged it down the baby's throat to the hilt and started a series of gestures that seemed fashioned to puncture him to the toes. Then she stabbed the other baby until it made me shudder. It looked like the murder of the infants. But they were not mangled and bloody. They were getting a square meal after the usual humming bird method of regurgitation.

They ran out their slender tongues to lick the honey from their bills. How they liked it! Then she settled down and ruffled up her breast feathers to let her babies cuddle close to her naked bosom. Occasionally she reached under to caress them with whisperings of mother love.—Country Calendar.

Carious Paradox About Hands.

It is a curious paradox that, as a rule, the large handed man loves small things, details, exquisitely finished objects and is microscope in his tendencies, while he whose hands are small delights in colossal of every sort, loving ostentation and display, immense houses, majestic estates and all else that is upon a great scale. His handwriting is large and perhaps full of flourishes, while that of the large handed man is small and precise.

Simply a Lottery.

Dr. Phaker—Take this prescription. It will either kill or cure you. Patient—But suppose it kills me? Dr. Phaker—Nothing ventured, nothing gained. My motto is, "No cure, no pay," so I'm taking a chance as well as you.—Philadelphia Press.

In Time of Trial.

Daughter (looking up from her novel)—Papa, in time of trial what do you suppose brings the most comfort to a man? Papa—An acquittal. I should think.

The soul of man is infinite in what it covets.—Ben Jonson.

Greatly Reduced Rates Between Points on Southern Railway

July 4th.

Account Fourth of July, Southern Railway will sell tickets between all points on its lines, July 1, 2, 3 and 4, 1905, at one fare and a third for round trip, final limit July 5th. Get particulars from nearest Southern Railway ticket agent, or write W. W. CROXTON, passenger agent, Norfolk, Va. 6-29-05.

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